1939 & 1940

INTERIM REPORT

of the

HORSHAM RURAL DISTRICT

(North-Eastern Combined
District of West Sussex)

by the

Medical Officer of Health

KENNETH N. MAWSON

M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

Health Department,
Comewell House,
North Street,
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September, 1942.

To the Chairman and Members of the General Purposes Committee of the Horsham Rural District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit herewith a short Interim Report on the health of the District and the work of the Health Department. It will be appreciated that, owing to war conditions, the work of the Department has increased materially and for this reason there has been considerable delay in collecting the necessary figures for the completion of this report. I have therefore taken the unusual course of preparing a report to cover the years 1939 and 1940, figures for each year being shown separately. By this means a saving in both time and paper has been effected. It will be noted that, in the interest of economy, the report has not been printed as in previous years.

The outstanding events of the period under review were the outbreak of war and the intensive Air Raid Precautions work which preceded it. The district was scheduled as a Reception Area under the Government Evacuation Scheme, and early in September 1939, 4,128 members of the priority classes were received in the Rural District.

The Council, in co-operation with the Horsham Urban District Council, had established an Evacuation Hospital at Kilnwood, Faygate, where accommodation was provided for 36 children, cases of scabies, impetigo, measles, whooping-cough etc. being admitted for treatment. As a result of hard work by a number of voluntary helpers the premises, which had been unoccupied for several years and were in a neglected state, were prepared and stood ready to receive patients when evacuation commenced. The total number of patients admitted between September 1939 and October 1940 was 154, and at no time did the number under treatment exceed 24. Owing to the drift-back of evacuees, it proved unnecessary to retain this

hospital in active use, and on account of expense and staffing difficulties it was decided to transfer the work to Tan Cottage, Horsham, in October 1940. Although this is a smaller house, the accommodation has proved adequate to meet all needs.

I wish to tender my thanks to the Chairman and Members of the General Purposes Committee with whom my work is particularly connected, and to acknowledge the loyal assistance of all members of the Health Department, and the co-operation of the Chief Officers of the Council.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

F. W. Hawdon.

Medical Officer of Health.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA, 1939.

Area (acres)	79,970
Population at Census, 1931	20,710
Estimated Resident Population, mid-1939	23,720
Number of Inhabited Houses (end of 1939) according to Rate Books	6,450
Rateable Value	£162,742
Sum represented by a Penny Rate	£622

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA, 1940.

Area (acres)	79,970
Population at Census, 1931	20,710
Estimated Resident Population, mid-1940	25,240
Number of Inhabited Houses (end of 1940) according to Rate Books	6,550
Rateable Value	£167,691
Sum represented by a Penny Rate	£661

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR.

1939

	Total.	M.	F.	
Live Births (Legitimate.....	305	156	149	) Birth Rate
(Illegitimate....	15	5	10	) 14.29
Still Births.....	11	5	6	) Rate per 1,000)Total Births 33.23
Deaths.....	311	150	161	Death Rate 13.15
England & Wales Birth Rate..	15.0			Death Rate 12.1
West Sussex Rural Districts Birth Rate..	14.85			Death Rate 11.93

Deaths from Puerperal Causes:-

	Deaths.	Rate per 1,000 Total Births.
Puerperal Sepsis.....	0	0.00
Other Puerperal Causes	3	8.84
Total.....	3	8.84

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age:-

All Infants per 1,000 Live Births.....	56.04
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 Legitimate Live Births.....	58.82
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 Illegitimate Live Births.	0.00

Deaths from Cancer (all ages).....	52
Deaths from Measles (all ages).....	0
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages).....	1
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age).....	2

The Chief causes of death were:-

Heart Disease.....	88
Cancer.....	52
Cerebral Haemorrhage.....	17
Pneumonia (all forms).....	11
Senility.....	11
Nephritis.....	8
Tuberculosis of the Respiratory System.....	7

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR.

1940

	Total.	M.	F.	
Live Births (Legitimate.....	300	145	155	) Birth Rate
(Illegitimate.....	9	5	4	) 11.84
Still Births.....	13	6	7	) Rate per 1,000)Total Births 42.07
Deaths.....	302	152	150	Death Rate 11.96

England & Wales Birth Rate..... 14.6 Death Rate 14.3

West Sussex Rural Districts Birth Rate..13.59 Death Rate 11.86

Deaths from Puerperal Causes:-

	Deaths		Rate per 1,000 Total Births.
Puerperal Sepsis.....	0	...	0.00
Other Puerperal Causes...	0	...	0.00
Total.....	0	...	0.00

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age:-

All Infants per 1,000 Live Births.....	55.01
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 Legitimate Live Births.....	50.00
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 Illegitimate Live Births...	222.20

Deaths from Cancer (all ages).....	35
Deaths from Measles (all ages).....	2
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages).....	0
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age).....	1

The chief causes of death were:-

Heart Disease.....	82
Cerebral Haemorrhage.....	36
Cancer.....	35
Pneumonia (all forms).....	23
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System.....	10
Nephritis.....	7

NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The following cases were notified during:-	1939	1940.
Enteric	1	4
Scarlet Fever	61	39
Whooping Cough	✱	19
Diphtheria	11	5 (1 M)
Erysipelas	1	3
Measles	✱	169
Pneumonia	7	7
Puerperal Pyrexia	1	2
C.S.M.	1	3
Poliomyelitis	1	-

✱ = Not notifiable. M. = Military Case.

It will be noted that no epidemics of any kind occurred. Fears which had been expressed that the transfer of population in connection with the Evacuation Scheme, with the resultant mixing of urban and rural dwellers, would lead to a spread of infectious diseases, fortunately proved groundless.

Measles and Whooping Cough were added to the list of notifiable infectious diseases by the Provisional Regulations dated October 1939, which were superseded by the Measles and Whooping Cough Regulations, 1940. Unfortunately many children suffering from these diseases do not receive medical attention, owing to the mistaken idea, commonly held by parents, that they are trivial complaints. Thus the notification rate does not necessarily indicate the true incidence of these diseases.

The Council make an annual grant to the local Nursing Association towards the provision of nursing for Measles and Pneumonia.

T U B E R C U L O S I S.

1 9 3 9.

a). The number of cases notified for first time during the year..... 12

b). The number of cases added to Register other than by formal notification.... 1

	(a).	(b).		(a).	(b).
Pulmonary Males...	3	1	Non-Pulmonary Males...	3	-
Females...	3	-	Females...	3	-
	6	1		6	-

There were nine deaths from Tuberculosis; 7 pulmonary (5 Male, 2 Female); 2 non-pulmonary (both Female).

The number of cases of Tuberculosis on the Register at the 31st December, 1939 was 177.

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1 9 4 0.

The number of cases added to the Register during the year..... 22

Pulmonary Males...	6	Non-Pulmonary Males...	6
Females...	9	Females...	1
	15		7

There were fifteen deaths from Tuberculosis; 10 pulmonary (6 Male, 4 Female); 5 non-pulmonary (3 Male, 2 Female).

The number of cases of Tuberculosis on the Register at the 31st December, 1940 was 177.

BACTERIOLOGICAL SPECIMENS.

Prior to the outbreak of War, an Emergency Laboratory Service was organised by the Medical Research Council, in consultation with the Ministry of Health, in order to augment the existing facilities for bacteriological diagnostic work for Public Health purposes. One of the Emergency Laboratories under this scheme was established at Christ's Hospital, and work was undertaken, in the first place, without charge. This service, whereby reports could be obtained without loss of time due to postal delays, proved of the greatest possible assistance in the early days of the War, and doubtless contributed to the low incidence of outbreaks in the district. Not only were specimens received at any hour, but Dr. Cruickshank, the Officer in Charge, made his services available to the Department and to Practitioners in doubtful cases, and rendered considerable assistance in epidemological enquiries and in field bacteriology.

Under the agreement between the District Council and the Medical Research Council commencing 1st September, 1940, all routine bacteriological work for the District (including the examination of swabs, specimens of blood and faeces, routine water samples, etc.), is now carried out at the Emergency Public Health Laboratory and an agreed block payment made by the District Council. No limit is made to the number of specimens which may be submitted, and the scheme generally has been found of the greatest possible assistance to the Department.

The following table reveals the extent of the work carried out:-

	Nose & Throat Swabs.	Faeces.	Blood.	Sputum.
Sept. - Dec. 1939.	54	2	1	3
Jan. - March. 1940.	50	1	1	2
April - June, 1940.	8	16	2	-
July - Sept. 1940.	19	19	6	1
Oct. - Dec. 1940.	163	1	6	4

Bacteriological Specimens (Cont).

	Waters.	Miscellaneous.	TOTAL.	
Sept. - Dec. 1939.	3	4	67	
Jan. - March. 1940.	1	7	62	
April - June. 1940.	33	7	66	415
July - Sept. 1940.	19	15	79	
Oct. - Dec. 1940.	32	2	208	

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.

Accommodation for Infectious Disease.

There has been no change in the arrangements whereby patients are admitted to Swandean Isolation Hospital, Worthing. By agreement with the Corporation of the Borough of Worthing, eight beds are reserved for cases from the Horsham Rural District.

The following cases of infectious disease were admitted during the periods ending 31st December, 1939 & 1940:-

	1939	1940.
Scarlet Fever.....	48	32
Diphtheria.....	10	2
Typhoid.....	1	2
C.S.M.....	-	3
Measles.....	-	5
	59	44

AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

(a). The Morris Ambulance, jointly owned by the Urban and Rural District Councils, and used for the conveyance of patients suffering from infectious diseases, was purchased in 1927. Although maintained in fairly good running order, the vehicle is rather out of date.

The Caretaker of the Urban Council Offices acts as attendant for this ambulance. It is therefore necessary on occasions to arrange for the Swandean Hospital Ambulance, with a nurse in attendance, to collect cases where the patient is a woman, or a child acutely ill.

(b). For the collection and transfer of cases of non-infectious sickness and accident in the parts of the Rural District around the town of Horsham, the Horsham Division of the St. John Ambulance Brigade maintains a vehicle at their Headquarters in Park Street, a resident driver being employed. The duties of attendant are undertaken by the Nursing Division of the Brigade. No grant is made by the Council in connection with this work.

The town of Crawley and the surrounding district are served by a vehicle provided by the Crawley Division of the St. John Ambulance Brigade. The Crawley Nursing Division of the Brigade provide the necessary attendants.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

The staff at the outbreak of war consisted of Mr. V. Bartrim Chief Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor, Mr. L. Baker Sanitary Inspector, and Mr. H. Colbourne Additional Sanitary Inspector. The Council suspended Mr. Colbourne in June, 1940, because of his conscientious objections and the position has not been filled. Mr. Bartrim's work as Surveyor has been considerably increased as a result of Civil Defence duties (shelters, war damaged buildings, static water supplies etc.) and as he is responsible for the collection of refuse the organization and control of the salvage scheme has occupied much of his time. He was also appointed Casualty Recording Officer for the Horsham Urban and Rural area. Mr. Baker was appointed the Food Decontamination Officer, a position which appears to me one best filled by a Sanitary Inspector, but was also appointed by the Council as Salvage Officer for furniture.

As a result of the above conditions, there was a considerable reduction in the number of visits paid by your Inspectors during 1940.

W a t e r.

The outbreak of War gave cause for considerable anxiety in connection with the Water Scheme, in view of the fact that all water was pumped by electrical energy, thereby making the supply dependent upon the integrity of the "Grid System".

The possibility of linking up certain defective sources of supply in order to provide water to the Crawley area in emergency, was considered at a Conference in July, 1940, at which the Regional Water Engineer and Dr. Sucklin, were present. Up to the end of the period under review, no further steps had been taken in the matter, apart from the laying of a temporary main from the Balcombe Wall of the Middlesex Water Co. Water from this additional source was first pumped to supply in September '40.

Although the main source of supply to the Rural District is from the Chanctonbury areas, water is also received from the East Surrey Water Company, (at Crawley Oak and Rusper), and from the Horsham U.D. mains, as well as from the Mid-Sussex source referred to above. Samples are taken for bacteriological examination by the Health Department regularly each month, at the point of entry of the various mains. As all the sources are under regular supervision by the authorities concerned, it is considered that monthly sampling is adequate to ensure the safety of the supply.

Housing.

This work has proceeded during the period under review, although on a reduced scale. 911 visits were paid in 1939 and 354 in 1940. Action was taken in a number of instances under the Statutory Powers granted by the Public Health Acts, and the Housing Act, 1936.

Although not included in this abbreviated report, full details of the work are always available.

Inspection & Supervision of Food.

Visits have been paid to Dairies and Cowsheds, although on a reduced scale as compared with previous years. Inspection of bakehouses, stoves and places where food is prepared have been carried out. Full details of this work are available for reference.

In January, 1940, a Central Slaughter House was opened in Horsham by the Ministry of Food, and consequently slaughtering ceased in the Rural District. This resulted in a considerable increase in the work of the Urban Sanitary Inspectors, and it was therefore agreed that your four Inspectors should render assistance in this sphere. Responsibility was shared equally between the officers of the two Councils up to June, 1940, but from then until the end of the year, as a result of the suspension of the Additional Inspector, less help was available from the Rural Council's staff.

Factories Act 1937.

Regular visits have been paid as required. Details are available in the Department.

Rats & Mice (Destruction) Act, 1919.

In connection with the above, 75 visits were paid in 1939 and 79 in 1940. Many baits have been laid, and structural work carried out as required.

I N D E X.

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Ambulance Facilities.....10
Area..... 4

Births & Birth-Rate.....4 & 5
Bacteriological Specimens.....8 & 9

Deaths & Death Rate.....4 & 5
Diphtheria.....6 & 9

Factories Act, 1937.....12
Food, Inspection & Supervision of.....12

Hospitals.....1 & 9
Houses (Inhabited)..... 3
Housing.....12

Infantile Mortality.....4 & 5
Infectious Diseases.....6,8 & 9

Measles.....4,5,6 & 9
Meat & Other Foods.....12
Milk.....12

Population..... 3

Rateable Value..... 3
Rats & Mice (Destruction) Act, 1919.....12

Scarlet Fever.....6 & 9
Social Conditions..... 3

Tuberculosis.....4,5 & 7

Vital Statistics.....4 & 5

Water.....11
Whooping Cough.....4,5 & 6